

# Brooklyn Jewish Center Review

Rosh Hashanah, 5740

September, 1979

DEDICATED TO THE ON-GOING CELEBRATION OF  
OUR 60TH ANNIVERSARY



*A TIME TO BE SOLEMN*



*A TIME TO REJOICE*

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By Mr. Louis Kramer

*New Year Greeting Section*

# LINGER — IT'S TOO GOOD — TO END TOO SOON

## CELEBRATE UNTIL YEAR-END AND THEN SOME MORE

Thrice a year  
we celebrate at length.  
Passover, our Festival of Freedom,  
is too good for just a day or so.  
Sukkot, too, when we give thanks,  
is too beautiful for a fleeting visit.  
Hanukkah lights up our homes  
while we dedicate ourselves anew.  
Our six decades  
were too good  
to let them  
end too soon.  
We celebrate for a bit longer  
and ask you to tarry  
to show your affection,  
And place ourselves  
on the line  
to say we solidly  
BACK THE CENTER.

## GIVE TO THE KOL NIDRE APPEAL

During this grand celebration

ISRAEL H. LEVINTHAL, Rabbi

DAVID HAYMOVITZ, Rabbi

BENJAMIN MARKOWE, President

EMANUEL COHEN, Honorary President

LOUIS KRAMER, Chairman, Kol Nidre Appeal

# A CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER

For the last two years, and again this year, our esteemed colleague and member, Joseph Heller, has been exhorting our rabbinate to do something about the scandalous blight that lies on Jewish law, vis-à-vis, the "get". The silence that has pervaded this matter for centuries is thicker than the darkest moment before dawn. Except for Mr. Heller's articles (the latest appears in this issue), no one in the field of Jewish religion has raised or done anything about the issue.

Then, recently, there appeared a letter to the Editor of The New York Law Journal which spoke of a court decision handed down in Brooklyn. The wife was successful in obtaining a civil divorce. But the judge went further and directed the husband to give her a get. The court held that the Ketuba is a marriage contract. An ordained rabbi, who is an attorney familiar with civil and Jewish matrimonial law, testified and translated the Ketuba wherein the parties bound themselves to the laws of Moses and Israel.

Here the wife sued the husband for abandonment and cruel and inhuman treatment. He in turn countersued with a charge of adultery. The trap was sprung — dear husband had been hoisted on his own petard. The rabbi-attorney told the court that, under Jewish law, husband may not co-habit with wife, and having charged infidelity he was obligated to give the wife a get. If he didn't, she would become an "aguna", a state of limbo, neither married nor divorced. He could remarry, but not she, even with a civil divorce; as an observant Jew without a get she was lost.

The judge found this an intolerable condition and ordered the husband to write and deliver a get to the wife, at his expense, in proper form and overseen by a rabbi of the wife's choice. It was brought out that the couple had previously sub-

mitted this problem to a Bet Din which resolved it in favor of the wife.

Mr. Heller wrote the Law Journal's editor that our courts "cannot resolve a religious problem. The rabbinate will not be influenced by what the civil courts do." It is apparent, as he says, that the rabbinate has to make the interpretation and clear the atmosphere. This is a serious problem and one that must be overcome. There is a state of urgency and immediacy at present which cries for help — a clear and present danger.

Our mores have undergone great changes. Pornography can hardly be contained. We live in a free society, completely unfettered. Divorce, that is, civil, is rampant, with the figures amongst Jews soaring to dizzying heights. Young people find it simple to live together without benefit of clergy or otherwise to make it legal. Children are brought into the world by unmarried couples. And they split at will whenever the urge arises. By not marrying they avoid the problems of divorce and get. Is this what the rabbinate wants?

Our various Jewish groups wring their collective hands at huge conventions. They try to cope with the problem, make suggestions, run them up the flagpole, and watch how they wave. They're ready to spend money (which most of them don't have) to implement these emergency programs. But not one asks whether we should examine basics: why is this happening. There is cheaper approach, but not flamboyant and job-creating. The rabbinate must come to grips. Time is short and the bomb is about to explode.

There is a new wind blowing. It has been blowing for a long time. Rabbis of all persuasions, raise your sails, let them catch this wind, and set sail. We don't ask for changes in

law. Give us new interpretations that will eradicate the blight. You have the ingenuity to devise them. Show us your mettle. Your flocks have women who are entitled to live a decent religiously observant life, and you hold the key.

*Louis Kramer*

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## *Start The*

## *New Year*

## *Right !*

## SUPPORT

## THE

## KOL NIDRE

## APPEAL

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### ABOUT THE COVER

A time to be solemn — A time to rejoice. (Left) Blowing the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah. This woodcut appeared in a Passover Haggadah, published in Amsterdam in 1695. (Right) Procession with the Scrolls of the law on Simhat Torah, New York, 1892. (Both from N. Y. Public Library Picture Collection).



# OUR CENTER'S SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY

By Rabbi Israel H. Levinthal

Preliminarily, I wish to join with you in paying tribute to all the past presidents of our Men's Club who served so faithfully and effectively in making this group both a virile force in the life of the Brooklyn Jewish Center and an outstanding contributor, on the national scene, to the National Federation of Men's Clubs, of which it is a loyal member. It is eminently fitting to have these leaders as guests of honor on this occasion. In honoring them we are fulfilling a precept of our ancient Rabbis: "Le'psala tova, to a faithful worker and for a work well done we are duty bound to say *ye' yasher kochacha*, thank you — literally, may your strength increase". We are confident that they will continue to serve our Center with the same dedication that marked their service as presidents.

This is a special year in the Center's history. It marks the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of this institution. How well I recall that year 1919! For it was in the fall of that year that I cast my personal lot with the lot of a small band of persons who then had but a dream — the erection of a new type of Synagogue, a seven-day-a-week active institution that would serve the religious, educational, cultural, physical, social and communal needs of young and old.

The idea was not original with our Brooklyn group. It embodied a concept first proposed by the creative mind of Professor Mordecai M. Kaplan. His congregation in Manhattan, which was to be known

as the New York Jewish Center, began the erection of a building several months before we started our building program. Each Center used the same architect. Our project, however, was on a more massive scale, both in the scope of the structure and in the program of activities.

What a wonderful group of men it was that convened at the organization meeting in January of that year, in the home of Mr. Louis Cohen, on President Street! They were not more than a dozen men — but what vision, what daring, they had! They were all immigrant Jews. They had arrived from the old country with meager material assets — but what riches of faith, idealism and loyalty to their God and to their people they summoned up!

They had the courage to undertake the erection of an edifice which would involve an expenditure of some \$1,000,000, the most costly of any Orthodox or Conservative synagogue in the country of those days. Even in the Reform group then, there was no temple that could match our new structure in the facilities available for carrying on the comprehensive program of activities envisaged.

The vision and the dedication and the industry of these men — and also of the women who joined them — were extraordinary. Before the building was finished, when only the ground floor, which was later to be used as the gymnasium, was completed, they already decided to hold Friday night and Sabbath morning services. The community quickly responded. Long before the announced hour for the services, every seat in the temporary synagogue was occupied, and

only standing room was available for the additional throng. Our daily Hebrew School, too, started in temporary quarters. Plans were diligently being formulated for extensive future activities. The Public Forum, which was instituted immediately after the building was completed, attracted every Monday night men and women from all parts of the city, eager to listen to notable personalities discoursing on the issues of the day.

Cherished Center of ours — your name spread throughout the land and you soon became known as the Great Congregation! Some of that greatness was reflected upon me, and, because of your greatness, I suddenly was considered a great Rabbi. And if I want you to remain the Great Congregation, it is, of course, so that you may continue to serve — as you valiantly have served these many years in the past — the best interests of our faith and our people.

But I must confess that I have a selfish reason as well. I should like to continue to be — which through you I have become — a great Rabbi. The Rabbis present a striking interpretation of an event recorded in the Bible, which illustrates what I wish to say. While Moses was on the mountain receiving the Torah, the Israelites made a golden calf and worshipped it. As the Bible tells, when God saw what was happening, He said to Moses: *Lech red*, "go descend!" (Exodus 32:1-7). The usual translation is "descend from the mountain!" The Rabbis, however, put a new meaning to these words: *Lech red migdulascha*, "go descend from your greatness!" The only reason I gave you greatness was that Israel was a great people. But now that Israel has fallen, *ata lamah li*, "what need have I of you?" And the Rabbis significantly add: "Instantly, Moses lost his power, even his power to speak!" (Barachot, 32a). I do not want to hear these words of God's uttered to me. Therefore, retain the

(continued on page 8)

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Delivered at the special 91st Birthday Luncheon for Rabbi Levinthal tendered by the South Florida Friends of the Center, at Miami Beach, Feb. 25, 1979; and also at the Sixtieth Anniversary Dinner of the Center, May 6, 1979.

# CONSUMERISM IN TALMUDIC LAW

(Excerpts from Sunday Morning lectures)

By Rabbi David Haymovitz

It is generally assumed that laws and regulations for the protection of consumers are a recent innovation brought about by the pressures of life in a complex modern society. Therefore, it is surprising to find a large body of laws and regulations and procedures for the marketplace in the Mishna and Talmud. These laws specifically designed to protect consumers are so advanced that they can even serve as models for modern legislation in many societies today.

## A duty to reveal

Unlike most ancient legal systems which have generally embraced the old doctrine of “Caveat Emptor” — “buyer beware” — which relieves the seller of goods from any responsibility as to conditions and quality, and places all responsibility on the buyer to inspect and check before he buys, Talmudic law severely restricted the application of this doctrine and gradually extended the responsibility of the seller to inform the buyer as to conditions of the goods and sale.

Beginning with the laws against *intentional misrepresentation* — a biblical religious prohibition which the rabbis made a legal cause of action against the seller — the law extends the meaning of the word misrepresentation to include not only a *duty to reveal* defects known to the seller and not obviously visible to the buyer, but also a wide variety of conditions of which the seller *should be aware and inform the buyer*. Extending the laws of deceit, which includes examples such as mixing and diluting of wine or milk or the placing of a layer of oil on a keg full of water, the rabbis placed a duty to refrain from representations that implied a warranty

that did not exist. For example, meat soaked in water in order to make it look fatter, or entrails of an animal displayed in the store to make them look larger.

There was a further duty to reveal relevant information. If, for example, as part of the sales talk, one describes defects of the animal which clearly don't exist and sneaks into the list of defects, one that does exist, he has committed fraud and the sale is void. The rationale was that the seller intended the buyer to assume that the real defect is also non-existent. However, if the seller mentions one visible defect and said that there were many others, it was a valid sale because the consumer was put on notice.

## Fraud in weights and measures

Misconduct as to proper weights and measures was considered a very grave sin. The gravity of such misconduct was emphatically expressed in the following Talmudic statement: “The divine punishment for false measures will be more severe than that of marrying forbidden relatives.” Weights and measures were of particular concern to the sages who were in charge of proper conduct in the marketplace, especially in such necessities as grain, oil, and wine. Talmudic law specified the type of weights to be employed, procedures of weighing, general merchant rules to be applied and methods of enforcement. The law also elaborates in great detail on the requirements for the structure of the scales and their suspension.

Each town was required to regulate its own standard of measures but the variance between the measures of different places should not be more than one-sixth. In many locations all measures were checked

and sealed by officers appointed for that purpose. It was even prohibited for a Jew to keep in his house an unchecked measure or a measure that did not conform to the standard of the locale, lest someone might accidentally use it.

Merchants were also required to follow the local custom as to proper weighing and measuring. Where the custom was to give a little more, or to tip the scale, the seller was obligated to do so. The Talmud even specified the increased amount — one-hundredth for liquids and one four-hundredths for dry goods. Where provisions allow the scale pan to drop, the seller had to let it drop a handbreadth. The buyer had recourse against the seller even for the slightest mistake made in weight, measure or number.

A merchant who dealt in oil, wine, and other liquids, was required to clean periodically his weights and measures of all stickiness so as to assure an accurate weight. A storekeeper had to clean his measures twice a week, wipe his weights once a week, and cleanse the scale after each weighing. Market officers were appointed by the court to inspect the scales, weights and measures.

## Restriction of profits

Price controls of various sorts have been a recurring feature of many ancient legal systems since the times of Hammurabi. Talmudic law draws the line of profits at one-sixth above or below market price. If the price gave the seller more than one-sixth profit, the transaction was voidable at the will of the injured party. This Rabbinic institution was called “*Ona'ah*” — “Over-reaching.” Obviously these rules were designed to protect the consumer rather than prevent the vendor from making undue profit. This may be seen from the rules concerning *exculpatory clauses*. If the seller and buyer agree that the remedy for over-reaching should not apply to their specific transaction, it is invalid, but if in their agree-



ment they cite the true value of the goods as well as the purchase price, so that the purchaser knows exactly how much he is overpaying, the purchaser has no remedy.

The more pressing problem was the stabilization of the market price itself. A Talmudic discussion (*Baba Batra 89a*) reflects a debate over counter-inflation policies which is so familiar to us these days. On the one side the market forces argue that prices are best stabilized by free competition; on the other hand, there is the fear that hoarders (commodity speculators) will artificially stimulate the market. In some areas, Rabbinical authorities developed a system of actual price control. Communal courts were authorized to supervise the prices of essential commodities. In other areas, consumers' boycotts were used to fight artificial rise of prices. All these measures were reinforced by using the courts power of the *Herem* — excommunication of the offender.

#### Loss Leaders and cutthroat competition

The Talmudists wrestled with the question of permitting "bait techniques" to attract customers. The question was whether a storekeeper was permitted to give away nuts to children whose parents sent them to shop. Rabbi Judah maintained that this means of enticement was forbidden while the majority of sages maintained that this means of enticement was alright. When pressed for their reasoning, the sages explained that one storekeeper could distribute nuts and another plums, enabling the sellers to compete and the consumer to profit. Also, a storekeeper was permitted to lower his prices in order to undersell his competitors or to bait the consumer into the store by selling only one item at a very low price. Such conduct was praiseworthy since survival would necessitate that other stores lower their prices or at least keep in line and not overcharge and the consumer

could again benefit. However, fraudulent baiting was illegal. A merchant could not pretend to be opening a new cask of wine for the sake of his customer if he would have done so in the ordinary course of business anyway.

The sages allowed baiting but not switching. Promising more for the money as bait, the seller might then switch by giving inferior goods. Realizing that the customer would very often be swayed by such seller representations, some of which may be false, it was advisable not to indulge in these competitive practices.

Certain necessities, such as flour, oil and wine, had to be sold directly without an intervening middleman so as to keep prices at a minimum. To insure maximum supply of necessities, it was forbidden to export them from Israel to foreign countries. Hoarding of necessities was also forbidden for this may affect supply and price.

#### Overcharge for the use of money

In theory, fixing of interest rates would not arise in Rabbinic law since interest between Jews is forbidden. However, loans and transactions of money were carried out in a way that enabled indirect benefits for the use of money. The most usual form in which payment for the use of money was permissible was the *heter iskah*, an elaborate legal device which established a form of partnership between creditor and debtor. But a partnership which gives one side profits but no liability for losses is itself a form of usury and therefore prohibited. The agreement, therefore, makes the creditor liable for losses, but only if he can satisfy impossible evidentiary demand. The effect of this form of permission and others was that the prohibition of paying interest has lost all its practical significance. In such a case where interest was permissible as a form of sharing in profits, excessive overcharge for the use of money was also restricted.

#### Enforcement of consumer protection laws

The threat of legal action against the offender of laws protecting the consumer was an effective deterrent. The injured party had an easy access to the court. There were no court costs, no lawyers' fees, and no filled dockets. Bringing a suit was a simple and cheap remedy. In addition, Talmudic law operated in a society which accepted the theological implications of the law. Offenders feared divine wrath as well as civil retribution. Integrity in business dealings was emphasized in the following Talmudic statement, "After death when the soul of a person appears before the court on high for judgment, the first question asked is, were you honest in your business transactions?"

The Talmudic approach supported free competition except with regard to necessities and unconscionable profits. A great deal of market discretion was attributed to the consumer as evidenced by the laws permitting "Bait techniques". But areas beyond the consumer's cognition, such as weights and measures, were strictly regulated. Current market practice was the general rule for defining permissible behavior, provided that the buyer and seller acted in good faith. The regulatory agencies were efficient and non-expensive court systems, clearly defined standards of conduct and above all the fear of divine punishment.

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EVERY MEMBER

ENROLL

A NEW MEMBER

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# AGNON'S "DAYS OF AWE"

By Rabbi Mordecai H. Lewittes

An excellent source for folklore about Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur is Samuel J. Agnon's "Days of Awe." The Nobel laureate, in his inimitable classical Hebrew style, has recast many a wise Rabbinic Midrash or apt Hasidic tale. The book has also been made available in English by Schocken, the publisher of Agnon's novels and short stories.

A paraphrase or brief summary of some of the quotations and parables follows.

## Preparation

Preparation for Rosh Hashanah begins on the first of Elul, the month preceding the New Year. It was on this day, according to tradition, that Moses ascended Mount Sinai to receive the second set of tablets. He remained on the mountain-top for forty days and nights, descending on Yom Kippur.

Agnon reminds us that in some Eastern European communities the *shamash* would call out "*Shuvu, banim shovavim!*" (Return, O wayward children!) In all synagogues the shofar was blown each morning; Psalm 27 was read morning and evening. The opening verse, "The Lord is my light and my salvation," applies particularly to Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, according to the Rabbis.

The purpose of the preparatory rituals is to call attention to the need for *teshuvah*. Although usually translated "penitence" or "repentance," *teshuvah* literally means "return". "Penitence" is allied to the word "punishment," but *teshuvah* implies a *return* to God and to the teachings of the Torah rather than punishment.

The concept of return is illustrated by the Midrashic tale, retold by Agnon, of the prince who was estranged from his father. The boy

wandered to a distant province where he became a shepherd. Unlike the other shepherds, however, he did not have enough money to buy straw to thatch his shelter as a protection against the rain. One day the king visited the province, and, as was the custom, received petitions from those who had urgent requests. The shepherd prince, still concealing his identity, threw a note into the king's carriage asking for money to build a thatched hut. He was recognized, however, and brought before the king who tearfully pleaded with his son, "Have you forgotten? You are a prince. Return, Return!"

The message is clear. The author is using the Midrash as a vehicle for pleading with Jews everywhere to reclaim their royal heritage and to return to their traditions and to their people.

The mood of this solemn period of the year is well expressed by Rabbi Elimelekh of Lizansk who would sadly say, "How can I appear before the Holy One, Blessed Be he, on the Day of Judgment when I have committed so many sins?" He would then list in great detail each sin or infraction of which he had been guilty. But then he would console himself by saying, "At least one good deed will come to my defense — my broken heart."

On the Saturday night preceding Rosh Hashanah, at midnight, the sexton went from house to house, knocked three times on each door and called out, "Awake, awake, arouse yourselves, arise for the service of the Creator." And men, women and children would arise for Selihot. A support for this practice is found in the words of the Psalmist, "At *midnight* I will arise to give thanks unto Thee because of Thy righteous judgment" (Psalm 119:62). The midnight following

the Sabbath is a propitious hour for penitential prayers since Jews have just been engaged in study and have enjoyed the delights of the Sabbath and are therefore in a happy mood. The *Shekhinah* or Divine Presence, we are told in the Talmud, rests on man not in time of sadness or lamentation, but only at the time of the joyful performance of a mitzvah.

## Rosh Hashanah

One of the basic prayers recited on Rosh Hashanah is Avinu Malkenu, a prayer said to have been composed by Akiva during a drought when the people fasted and prayed for rain. Hence, Avinu Malkenu is not recited on a Sabbath when fasting is inappropriate.

There are five verses in Avinu Malkenu beginning with the phrase, "Inscribe us". These five verses, according to one preacher, correspond to the Five Books of Moses.

"Inscribe us in the book of good life," reminds us of *Genesis* when life was created.

"Inscribe us in the book of redemption and salvation," reminds us of *Exodus* which narrates the redemption of Israel from slavery in Egypt.

"Inscribe us in the book of sustenance and maintenance," reminds us of *Leviticus* with its emphasis on investing each daily act with holiness.

"Inscribe us in the book of merit," reminds us of *Numbers* which describes how each family in the desert encamped under its tribal banner and enjoyed *Zekhut Avot*, the blessings we receive because of the merit of the patriarchs and our ancestors.

"Inscribe us in the book of pardon and forgiveness," reminds us of *Deuteronomy*, the book in which Moses rebukes the Israelites for the sins they have committed and in which the need for repentance is taught.

Thus, every verse of the prayer book has a personal message but is also connected with our people's



search for spiritual identity.

The three basic sections in the Musaf of Rosh Hashanah are termed *Malkhiyot*, *Zikhronot* and *Shofarot*. We acknowledge God as sovereign (*melekh*), we recall our actions which are weighed in the balance, and we sound the shofar. In blowing the ram's horn, says the Rambam, we use an instrument which is bent like our hearts.

"Happy is the people which knows how to make a joyful noise" (Psalm 89). Do not the nations of the world excel in making joyful noises with their blaring trumpets and resounding horns? Yes, but Israel excels in sounding the shofar, thus reminding God that He must depart for a while from the throne of strict justice and ascend the throne of mercy. For it is only through justice tempered with mercy that we can survive. And the time will come when God will sound the great shofar in Heaven and proclaim our deliverance on earth.

### Yom Kippur

The ten days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur give us further opportunity for self-examination and *teshuvah*. The road to follow is not readily perceived, as we learn from a parable by Rabbi Hayyim of Tzan.

A traveler was lost in the woods and did not know which road to take. After many hours of wandering he met a man coming from the opposite direction. The traveler rejoiced for now he would find out which was the right road.

As soon as the two travelers met, the first said to the other, "My brother, tell me which is the right road for I am lost."

The second traveler replied, "I do not know either, for I, too, have been wandering aimlessly. But this much I can tell you. Do not walk in the path which I have followed for it will lead you astray. I shall not choose your path and you must avoid my path. But together let us seek a *new* road which will lead us

to our goal."

The old corrupt paths have misled us, concluded Rabbi Hayyim. Together let us seek a new path in life.

Preachers were gentle in their rebukes for even the great prophet Isaiah was punished because he defamed the people by saying, "I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips."

The saintly Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel of Apta used to say: "I would abolish all fasts except those of the Ninth of Av and Yom Kippur. On the Ninth of Av, when we commemorate so many tragic events, who has the *desire* to eat? And on Yom Kippur, when our souls are uplifted, who feels the *need* to eat?"

Yom Kippur reminds us of the command to help our neighbors. The story is told of the Tzaddik, Rabbi David of Lilov, who was on his way to the synagogue to recite Kol Nidre. Suddenly he heard the voice of a child who was crying. He entered the house and found a child who apparently had been left alone by his parents who had gone to the synagogue. The Tzaddik spoke softly to the child and rocked him until the parents returned.

Similarly, the saintly Rabbi Israel Salanter on Yom Kippur once saw a distressed, lost animal belonging to a Gentile whom he knew. He led the animal over stones and through fields until he had brought it back to its owner. Meanwhile, the bewildered congregation waited for their Rabbi.

Agnon concludes with a classic tale told of the Baal Shem Tov, founder of Hasidism.

Immediately after the close of Yom Kippur it is customary to recite the blessing over the moon. On one occasion the moon was obscured by clouds.

"If Jews fail to observe this mitzvah," reflected Israel Baal Shem Tov, "a catastrophe may befall us." He sought through mystic formulas and meditations to remove

the clouds behind which the moon was hiding. All to no avail.

The Hasidim were accustomed to celebrate the night following the Yom Kippur fast with dancing and festivity. "Have we not completed our devotions on this sacred day under the guidance of our leader who is like the Kohen Gadol of old?" they said.

That night, in particular, they danced with joy and hitlahavut (enthusiasm). At first they danced in the courtyard, but as their fiery enthusiasm waned they burst into the Baal Shem Tov's house and inner chamber and drew him into the whirling circle. In the midst of their dancing, the shamash shouted gleefully, "the moon, the moon. The clouds have vanished and the moon has appeared." The Hasidim looked up at the moon and recited the prescribed benedictions.

Said the Baal Shem Tov, "what I could not accomplish through mystic formulas and meditation, these Hasidim have accomplished through dance and joy."

Agnon in his anthology has succeeded in depicting the rich colors of the sacred holidays and in capturing the varied moods experienced by the Jew on the *Yamin Noraim* (Days of Awe).

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(continued from page 4)

greatness of your past, so that I may continue to bask in your reflected glory.

I am a realist. I appreciate that we cannot do now everything that we did in those early years of the Center's existence. But, I plead with you, dear men and women, try to preserve and cherish these beautiful memories of the years that made history for American Jewry. Above all, dedicate yourselves to the sacred task of maintaining and fostering the Brooklyn Jewish Center, not only as a historic landmark but also as a vital force which can still be a source of inspiration to all American Jews to work for the glory of our faith and our people for years and years to come!



# GABRIEL PREIL – HEBREW POET IN AMERICA

By David Rudavsky  
Professor of Hebrew Culture and Education,  
New York University

*(in loving tribute to my devoted friend, Ralph Deutsch, of blessed memory)*

(Editor's note: Prof. Rudavsky excerpted this article from one that appeared in Judaism (Spring 1976) and translated the verses of poetry.)

Towards the end of his days, Judah Leib Gordon (1830-9) a leading Hebrew poet of the *Haskalah* (Jewish Enlightenment) posed the painful question "For Whom am I Laboring?" Almost a century later Gabriel Preil, of the few recognized Hebrew poets left on the American scene could repeat the same question, though actually his plight is different, since he does not depend on an American readership. In fact, only the first of his five volumes of poetry, *Nof Shemesh Ukfor* (Landscape of Sun and Frost), published in 1945, appeared in the United States. The others were put out by prestigious publishers in Israel, and circulated primarily in that country.

Preil came to America from Mariampol in Lithuania in 1922 at the age of eleven. He attended New York City public schools and later studies at Yeshiva University. Though he has lived all but the first decade of his life in New York City, he regards Israel as his spiritual home. Perhaps the well known line from the great medieval lover of Zion, Yehuda Halevi, "My heart is in the East, though I am in the outermost West," can apply to Preil. In "Witnesses," he confirms his longing for the Jewish homeland. Here, as in so much of his other verse, Preil veils his basic thought in concise symbol and metaphor:

This snow which so insidiously melts in my  
veins,  
This reason flickering like a wavering candle,  
This dream touched by the dust of sobriety –  
Were all of them witnesses that for me the  
birthland waits.

Another poem, "The Two," begins with a simple assertion: "I live in New York and shall yet reside in a city in Israel." In the idiom and style of the Hebrew prophets of old, he gives expression, in "Confession to My Land," to a vision – a mystic illumination in the course of which he hears a voice reproving him for living amidst alien cultures:

And it was when I dwelt in the city of  
Brooklyn in the month of Ziv\*

\*Ziv, literally "brightness," refers to the month of Iyyar, roughly corresponding to May.

In the tenth year of the State of Israel,  
A shadow descended upon me from ambush,  
a cloud darkening my noons.  
For I was intensely preoccupied with foreign  
colors, and ending my days  
Not aware of the one redemption awaiting  
and expecting me  
In a land that has not as yet absorbed the  
echo of my footsteps, yet  
Frees my blind dreams and impels me to  
return to my true source.

After the Six Day War, the poet extolled Israel's triumph in "Miraculous Things: 1967":

In the small Jewish East  
Surged waves of lions  
Covering shores like fire  
Reaching levels of concepts  
Which froze like mountains,  
Forsaken in books.

From now on  
As if dwarfed  
The great alien West  
Will no longer unleash upon us  
The dogs of loneliness.

Waves of lions are surging.

Then, Preil visited Israel in '68 as a guest of the Jerusalem municipality, and was inspired by what he saw there. He caught the spirit of Jerusalem, the holy city, where prophets had once roamed, thundering words of exhortation and admonition to their people. In this city the past and present have been linked in a long chain of history and tradition. The old and new converge and merge there in a unified context, of which he speaks in his "First Poem from Jerusalem":

Under these historic skies  
I am older than Abraham and his Stars. I,  
The very youthful father of the children,  
Who play among the pinkish trees.

And on an afternoon in Alharizi Street  
There peers from an arched frame  
An hour of unique grace, like that which  
surely  
Once whispered to the prophet weary  
Of fire and dreaming of a village  
Cool among the stars.

The bright, orange-yellow full moon of Jerusalem  
spreads a festive radiance over the city. The poet em-  
braces this mood:

In the great city  
Of sleeping kings  
I wake with the moon,  
The only piece of bread  
In my great hunger,  
The meaning perhaps of this festivity.

The title of Preil's volume of verse, "Of Time and Place," suggests the two principal pivots around which his poems revolve. In more prosaic terms, these may be viewed to as the time-space continuum which can be said to embrace not only the physical, but, also, the metaphysical world. The poet paints a broad canvas with a highly sensitive brush, replete with delicate nuance. He lives among the "rage and whisper of colors" as he puts it; in fact, Preil has been acclaimed as the outstanding colorist in Hebrew poetry. In this respect, he may be said to be close to the Anglo-American Imagist school, which maintains that a poet's verse should be hard, clear and free of stilted and artificial language and imagery.

Not only does the poet reproduce the colors of the external, visible landscape, but, also, the inner, invisible one of heart and mind. He describes the leafy green of the trees in the spring, the grey of winter, the somber color of frustration, the melancholy hues of anguish and the hazy shades of memory. The snow arouses in him a feeling of loneliness:

Your song, O snow, your song of white  
change is perhaps more fixed and firm  
Than the granite isles in a wine-clouded sea;  
But you are more solitary than they —  
And I still lonelier than you.  
(Sketches of Maine)

Death, too, has its color — blacker than black. Death, the inexorable fate and destiny of all, is, of course, an inescapable reality. Yet the poet cannot reconcile himself to this basic fact of existence. To him, death is the self-evident opposite of life. It cancels life, and why life, if it is consumed by death? The two are mutually contradictory:

How shall I give praise to the bright-eyed  
garden-god,  
To the cherry tree drunk with a red dream,  
When in chambers blacker than black, men  
sleep  
And silently, voicelessly declare:  
"You, too, will be like bright skinned fruit,  
brimming with drunkenness  
Until one day the fall, until one moment,  
extinction.  
You too . . ."

One day also I.  
(How Shall I Give Praise)

But there is a glaring distinction between the life of man and that of the tree, as observed in the Hebrew Scriptures (Job 14:7ff). When spring comes, the tree, defying death, returns to life, but the man who tended it is dead and gone, never to return. The fruit of the resurrected tree rises in a mighty protest against the ravages of death:

The cherry tree became red again  
But the old man who last year gave me a  
taste of it  
Is no more.  
Its fruit is blacker this summer  
My fruit grows blacker, too.

If the tree sensed the old man's absence  
I know not  
But this is certain: This year its fruit rises  
In a defiant, howling flame  
Against the night of death, avowing  
Life's recurring colors.  
And would that the last sweeping tempest  
Cleansing our bones  
Be like the summer that storms  
Its golden glory for ever.  
(Concerning the Cherry Tree)

The drama of death is portrayed in a burial scene, and we see its divergent colors around the open grave. The red shirt of the grave digger is ablaze in the sun. This is the outer scape. But there is also an inner one: the bewilderment and sadness of the mourners gathered around the gaping hole:

The blouse of the grave digger  
Reddened in the sun,  
His boots were blackened  
Against the white snow:  
As if for the first time  
Day turned to night,  
The earth, as if before then,



Did not open its mouth so —  
And the mourners, like children astounded  
Stood before a fact of time.  
The blouse of the grave digger reddens  
And their blood turns to snow.  
(This, The First Time)

Death may threaten the old and weak, but the concept of age is merely relative:

He was old when he was buried,  
The rain, falling on his grave,  
Saw him as very young, as a child.  
The tears falling on his mound  
Were as ancient as eternity, as the days  
of man.  
(He Was Old)

Life is a passing nightmare, and the poet seeks its meaning in the riddle of death. Is it only a process of oxidation, a purposeless, psychic mechanism? It is a revolving wheel, and the poet reflects: "I am like Job in the shadow of the wheel." The flesh, too, the frame of life, is wretched; it is prone to yield to the lures of transitory pleasure, vanishing smoke. In the end, the grave engulfs and levels all.

The flesh that is confined like a prisoner in  
his cage  
The flesh that dreams until taken by the pit,  
And after it sobers, the pit is good for it.  
Then the heights descend unto the valleys and  
the bridges kneel in water.

Time is the very essence of life. Among living creatures, only man is concerned with time and the poet is obsessed with it. Time is an enchanted round of movement, without direction or true destination. Evening, a segment of time, is like a pilot repeating his weary run. In his "Ages," the poet contemplates the several stages of life:

Childhood is a yet unknown and pathless  
land,  
A still uncharted map without a designated  
hill or isle.  
Youth is a wind, tensed like a bow,  
A flowing wind, an airy, glowing silver;  
Old age is an hour before night,  
The silence enveloping the summits of the  
oak and nut tree,  
Floating by a well, in which the stars grow  
pale.

These veiled metaphors and allegories in Preil's verse are elegant in their complexity.

But the poet predicts, in his "From Me To The Year 2000," that by that time all of his problems will be over. By then, he will enjoy a "blessed sleep" and will "fear no evil." The tender-aged young children of the present generation will have reached middle age. For them, the moon will be a way-station on the fringes of an interstellar pathway. He contemplates his own passing days, which he sees in his "Love for Days" as "leaves of glass falling from my tree of time, flickering, seeking meaning, the gold of pineapple and orange." They are now growing ever more precious, since they are declining, and he clings to them lovingly:

With my hands I embrace the vanishing days  
And mourn their passing.  
I hold them as doves close to my heart  
And sing their praises:  
There are days flooded with glowing colors,  
And there are days sculpted and polished  
by the ice,  
Days fragrant as apples and days like rust,  
Days clear as crystal, and days beating their  
Rains.

In "To the Poem" (*Lashir*) he affords us a glimpse into the recesses of his soul, where one can discern the pangs of creativity, the inner struggle and conflict, the ecstasy and tension. Preil addresses the poem with intense rapture:

First I take you as a summer storm takes  
a tree,  
With lashes of fire, with a keen blade,  
Then coolly come to examine you.  
Are you clear water or do you stutter like  
wine?  
Is your sound silver or are you heavy like  
iron?  
Perhaps you are a humble field of corn  
Perhaps a wanton, haughty stalk of wheat?  
I do not know.

In a similar idiom, he describes the powerful hold upon him of the initial lines of a poem as

A hawk that does not relax its grip on its prey  
Or as a forest set ablaze by lightning  
From all its blinded sides.

Yet, after the poet's fervor and passion are spent, he is disenchanted. His verse is now like

Blind arrows shot  
Into the heart of an imaginary eternal city,  
And you are only a weary hunter.  
(The Weary Hunter)

There is turmoil and restlessness, sorrow and anguish in the world; it troubles and wearies the sensitive poet, who seeks release and respite. He learns of Nirvana, the supreme goal of life in Buddhism, that transcendent, indescribable state of serenity and bliss of non-existence which is achieved through the extinction of all passion and desire. It calls for a shedding of the self. In "Words of Oblivion and Peace" there seems to be an affinity between prince and poet regarding this concept of redemption:

I ate evening bread with the prince of Siam,  
him of the brown face and white smile;  
Garbed in festivity and humility of spirit  
like the first skin of his body.  
He chatted casually about London and New  
York — big towns lacking in true wonders  
And his memory paused on the people of his  
native land, small of stature, who feed on  
pale rice  
And about the flowers there, mighty with  
pride, that glowingly mobilize their armies  
of color.  
With low voice lowered, the son of Siam  
added that there is nothing like the  
complete oblivion personified in Buddha—  
Not the slightest ripple ever ruffles his seas  
And there is nothing like the peace of seasons  
without end that dream in his orchards.

But is such deliverance not a form of death, and, therefore, no solution to the problem of life? Yet Koheleth had pronounced the day of death as better than that of birth. The rabbis also explained the phrase "very good" in the Biblical story of creation, as referring to death, while life is described merely as "good."

Our poet is very much at home in New England. He is enamored of its rugged landscape, forests and lakes. He is lured by the temperate spring and the severe winter of Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire. In his *Agamin* (Lakes), a deeply contemplative poem, Preil portrays a merry winter scene. Skaters are gliding on the ice of the frozen lake:

The icy lake is wounded by whitening  
scratches —  
Joyous wintry figures move and freeze  
upon it,  
From somewhere, blind time has cast them  
forth  
Time that burns and subsists.

Against this terrestrial scene, the poet counterposes its metaphysical model in the timeless heavens. The

latter, in Platonic terms, may be said to be the abstract ideal model of the former. In this upper realm, time has placed a satellite and an airplane, symbols of human technology, which disrupt the absolute silence prevailing in those celestial precincts:

The second lake above, crossed with  
wounds of light and cloud —  
It was the eternal witness of time, abiding  
with it.  
The sharp point of a circling plane surprised  
it, or another moon  
That splits its wave.

The plane and the satellite remind the poet of the array of weapons of destruction which man's ingenuity has forged, and that bring him ever closer to Armageddon. This will continue

Until the melody wanes on the lake  
And the unknown world is gathered  
unto death.

The poet is thoroughly familiar with the Jewish sections in New York City and attempts to reproduce their characteristic Jewish atmosphere. In "Sabbath in Williamsburg" he depicts the peace and repose that reign in that pious Hassidic community on the holy Sabbath. It reminds him of his native Lithuanian townlet, where Jews were annihilated by the Nazis.

On a crystal cold autumn Sabbath  
There is something springy in a Jew's walk —  
Wise clarity in the seeing of things.  
The shipyard rests, the metals slumber on  
trees.  
Graceful skies becalm the river. A droning  
plane pacifies the skies.  
Perhaps this is not the little town on my river-  
like childhood, but its breath  
Hovered today like a bird in my way:  
Here is the crumbling fence, the tiny  
windows, the golden air.  
Here are also Jewish children, who seemingly  
were not given to extinction, and their  
past is the present.

And from a *Bet Midrash*\* burst out voices in  
a never ending *Borkhi Nafshi*\*\*

\* Literally, a house of study or chapel.

\*\* Literally "Bless, O my soul," the initial words of Psalm 104, which is the first of a series of psalms read in traditional synagogues on Sabbath afternoons in the autumn and winter months.



At the day's departure, evening does not  
indulge again in mundane doings among  
the stars  
And the shipyard glitters, as if holiday-  
taught.

In examining Preil's verse, one is impressed with the wide spectrum of subjects and experiences that it embodies. The titles of his poems reflect this quality: "A Visit to a Friend," "Moving to an Apartment," "A Poet and His Seas," "A First Flight" or even a prosaic episode such as a stifling subway ride. This tendency has earned Preil the distinction of being the only Hebrew poet of fact or artifact. His extensive range of themes and content adds a new dimension to Hebrew poetry. One such poem included in his *Sketches of New York* describes a commonplace occurrence — a sultry summer morning in that city.

Half past eleven. A hot day glides forth like  
a wave, ignites like a forest.  
And the city denudes itself before me like a  
desert, like a woman inviting ravishment.  
My eyes are red from a disturbed night —  
into my mouth creeps the taste of sand and  
weariness  
And I am a beast caged by a great dazzler,  
Who beats on the panes as with drums of  
Tophet —  
A hunter who shoots poisoned arrows from  
the levels of drudgery.

In sharp contrast, another poem in the same series vividly describes a hot summer night in the artificially cooled comfort of an automated restaurant:

The Automat is open all night  
Glasses speak, silver utensils smile  
The heat is a deserter who abandoned his  
post.  
Here reigns a strong winter, creature of a  
laboratory.  
The air flashes mechanized cold and it is  
strange  
That it almost resembles a ripple of wind  
combing  
A whitish field before daybreak.

Something of the past possesses the people  
Entering the restaurant;  
They appear as if rising from a nocturnal  
race  
Their images more secretive than night.

In "The Pigeon Feeder," Preil probes the hearts of the everyday people whom he sketches. He describes them as:

Those who loiter towards evening in the  
gardens,  
And feed the pigeons out of a grey sorrow,  
Carry their loneliness as a sword in its sheath.

They listen to the rustle of wings  
And their head is unbowed  
Despite the sword-like loneliness.

He depicts another familiar sight in "Three Birds and One:"

Three birds  
Were musical notes,  
Three drops of color

On a telephone wire — a pale grey  
Carrying sound from labyrinth to labyrinth  
From an abstract land to one less defined.

Somewhere there peers at me one large eye —  
A fourth bird dances on a grey wire.

Thus sings Gabriel Preil, the reflective lyric poet who has blazed new trails in Hebrew poetry. He has earned numerous awards in recognition of his artistic achievements, among them the much coveted Louis Lamed Prize, the Kovner Hebrew Poetry award, the Bitzaron Poetry Prize and, more recently, New York University's Irving and Bertha Neuman award. Before that, in 1972, he received the honorary degree of DHL from the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York. Preil, an American Hebrew poet who speaks to humanity and the world, has attained an important place in modern Hebrew letters, with his unique and original contribution.

*Start The*

*New Year*

*Right !!*

LET'S BEGIN OUR NEW SEASON

WITH A  
RECORD ENROLLMENT!

# A LAWYER'S THIRD PLEA FOR A CHANGE IN JEWISH FAMILY LAW

By Joseph Heller

It took a long time for me to re-search, accumulate references, run them down and see what they really mean. I concluded that what I have already written,<sup>1</sup> should have satisfied most Conservative Rabbis, that Jewish Law, as it applies to divorce, never directly vested the husband with both *personal authority* and *judicial power* to terminate a marriage, rather than have the Court do so, as is the case with other controversies.

I know of no judicial system, be it religious or civil, where one individual is permitted to formulate a "flaw" in a relationship with another person, and then by his own authority, terminates the relationship in *his* favor.

I am not unmindful of Islamic Law which considers it basic family law, that a husband may thus terminate a marriage. I am also not unmindful of Talmudic teaching, which tells us it is basic Jewish Law, that a husband acquires the right of giving a "get" by reason of the marriage contract, as interpreted in ancient days. A contract is an agreement between two or more parties for the doing or not doing of some definite thing. The Decalogue lists a wife among a man's possessions, along with servants and animals. The husband was called the *baal* or master of his wife as he was the baal of his house. But an agreement requires consent of both parties. The wife never knew, agreed or consented to the rights and privileges assumed by the husband. The custom, establishing the husband as master of his wife, has been interpreted by the Rabbis, although debtor of the contract, as implicitly forming part of it. Nothing can be implied in human

relationships which adversely affects one of the parties.

The marriage contract, as we know it, is the "Ketubah". It is part of the marriage ceremony performed according to the laws of Moses and Israel. Nothing is found in this instrument giving the express contractual right to sever the marriage. The words, according to the laws of Moses and Israel, it is claimed, justified rabbinical interpretation that a married woman becomes the possession of her husband in all the years to come.

It would appear Rabbis are traditionally authorized to interpret Jewish Law in the light of existing conditions and changes that take place over the centuries. An excellent example is Rabbenu Gershon's ordinance issued in the eleventh century, that a husband may not divorce his wife without her consent. Is there no Rabbi living today who possesses the dignity, strength and fortitude who will promulgate a decree which will take the power away from a husband to refuse the delivery of a "get" where the marriage is dead?

Things do not happen. They are brought about. What was at one time, need not be at this time. If no rational basis exists for its present being, do away with it.

In the *Algemeiner Journal* of June 22, 1979, Rabbi Bernard Rosensweig, President of the Association of Orthodox Rabbis, in an interview, said it was very disturbing that "the use of the get is used as a means to extract money from the unfortunate woman", i.e. the refusal to free the wife (only a man can institute a Jewish religious divorce) unless the husband is paid off. The remedy he suggests is that

"the Jewish community can utilize its power through ostracization."

Rabbi Rosensweig — can you tell us how do we ostracize a person having a common name like 1,000 others living in a community with over a million others?

A Rabbi is variously described as a preacher or a religious functionary. He is also spoken of as an expounder of the law. When a Rabbi sits in Jewish Court, he is functioning as a judge. A lawyer, on the other hand, is part of a judicial system during his entire career. In the study of the Mishnah, we find, that how we read the Bible, and the emphasis we place on certain words, to a great degree, determines what we wish to find in it. This is a lawyer's conclusion.

In the many decisions of the Rabbinical judges, we find that what is spoken of as revealed doctrine, actually at times is a misreading of the sacred law, in the light of their own formal statement of religious doctrine.

While it is true a lawyer is concerned with the making of a good presentation favorable to his client, no lawyer is worth his salt if he is oblivious of contrary views.

The purpose of my three essays is (1) to brief the misleading and unsound argument that by divine power, a husband is vested with the right to unilaterally *divorce* his wife; (2) to establish that our present Rabbinate lack courage or are unwilling to undo a wrong, by refusing to repudiate, or modulate, an improper interpretation of family law, by Rabbis who held court in ancient times.

Let me begin with the Introduction to Gettin.<sup>2</sup> This tractate is based on Deuteronomy 24:1-4. The author uses the same schematic arrangement I used in one of my previous articles. Since I am not a member of the Rabbinical Dynasty, I thought it best to set forth the author's breakdown of this particular chapter in order to understand its contents.

(1) When a man takes a wife,



marries her, and it comes to pass if she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some unseemly thing in her, that he write her a bill of divorcement, and gives it in her hand and sends her away out of his house;

(2) And she departs out of his house and she goes and becomes another man's wife;

(3) And the latter husband hates her, and writes her a bill of divorcement, and gives it in her hand, and sends her away out of his house; or if the latter husband die, that took her to be his wife;

(4) Her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife; after that she was defiled; for that is abomination before the Eternal, and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the Eternal, thy God, gives thee for an inheritance.

In discussing the provision of Deuteronomy 24 with numerous Rabbis, I ask the question over and over again: wherein do you find language which justifies the conclusion that a husband is given a mandate whereby he may send his wife away because he likes the face of another women?

The only answer that has come forth, is that the opening sentence recites a situation, whereby a husband, who is not pleased with his wife, writes her a bill of divorcement, sends her away, results in an investiture of the power of divorce. The difficulty with this reasoning is that each of the four subdivisions in and by themselves, creates, no rights or liabilities. There is no proper ending at the conclusion of any of the subdivisions. Not until you come to the end of verse 4, do you conclude, that the subject matter dealt with, is the remarriage of a divorced husband from a wife twice-divorced.

Surprisingly enough, none of the Rabbis I spoke with countered with the argument that if the provision did not, directly or by interpretation, vest a husband with the judicial power to divorce his wife, why

was it necessary to provide strictures against remarrying a twice-divorced wife? I will attempt to answer this question.

There is no positive command in scripture authorizing the husband to judicially divorce his wife. There is no negative command which prohibits the wife from divorcing her husband. The custom, whereby the husband used his personal authority to divorce his wife, existed in the patriarchal age. It was in use before the Bible was reduced to writing. It dates back to the time man owned his wife, not unlike a chattel.

It was the Rabbis who formulated broad rules of interpretation, ascribing their formulations to scripture. Whether their conclusions were humane, rational and desirable, in the light of subsequent events, is questionable.

#### CLARIFICATION OF DEUTERONOMY 24:1-4

The first two phrases need no explaining: (1) a man takes a wife and (2) he marries her, the verse then states "he finds some unseemly thing in her" which needs clarification.

What is meant by the words "he finds some unseemly thing in her"?

The School of Shammai says: "A man may not divorce his wife unless he has found in her aught improper." (meaning lewdness or unchastity). But the School of Hillel says: "Even if she spoiled a dish for him as it is said because he hath found some unseemly thing in her." Rabbi Akiba says: "Even if he found another more beautiful than she is".<sup>3</sup> The fourth verse which states: "Her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she was defiled; for that is an abomination before the Eternal, and thou shalt not cause the land to sin," needs clarification.

Why was it necessary to prohibit a husband from remarrying his divorced wife who re-married and was again divorced?

The prophet Jeremiah gives an

answer. He makes reference to Deuteronomy 24<sup>4</sup> as follows:

"The word of the Lord came to me as follows: If a man divorces his wife, and she leaves him and marries another man, can he ever go back to her? Would not such a land be defiled"? Now you have whored with many lovers, can you return to me? says the Lord: "Look up to the bare heights and see where have they not lain with you? You waited for them on the roadside like a bandit in the wilderness, and you defiled the land with your whoring and your debauchery".<sup>5</sup>

The Prophet Jeremiah confirms that chapter 24 of Deuteronomy was directed to a curtailment of promiscuous conduct rather than to the right of a husband to divorce his wife. Moreover Deuteronomy 24 was written as a deterrent to the mores of the time and the place. Deuteronomy in its entirety was really a moral code to govern the relationship of the Hebrews and the heathens whose lands they were about to conquer.

We are dealing with a period where the inhabitants were sex-oriented. "No Israelite woman shall be a cult prostitute, nor shall any Israelite man be a cult prostitute. You shall not bring the fee of a whore or the play of a dog into the house of the Lord your God in fulfillment of any vow, for both are abhorrent to the Lord your God".<sup>6</sup>

For instance, it was very common among the Canaanites, Hittites and others to engage in wife swapping. The Hebrews found the exotic woman of the Semites very tempting. The prophet Malachi rages, "The Lord is a witness between you and the wife of your youth, with whom you have broken faith though she is your partner and covenant spouse. Let no one break faith with the wife of his youth. For I detest divorce, said the Lord, the God of Israel."<sup>7</sup>

Morality among the people preceding and following Exodus was at such a low level that all the prophets cried out for a halt and for a re-



turn to the ways of the Lord. The Prophet Ezekiel spoke thus: "You made yourself a mound in every square. You built your mound at every cross-road and you sullied your beauty and spread your legs to every passerby and multiplied your harlotries. You played the whore with your neighbor, the lustful Egyptians. You multiplied your harlotries to anger me. You played the whore with the Assyrians. You multiplied your harlotries with Chaldes, the land of the traders."

I think enough has been said to convince the most addicted fanatic to accept the argument as a plausible one, and the reasoning as logical, that scripture never vested in the husband judicial power to divorce his wife. The fact that a party to a controversy may himself adjudicate the controversy is unheard of in judicial annals.

In ancient days there was no concept of what is known today as public policy. To define the term is difficult for it is a concept subject to change.

Our Court of Appeals explained the concept thus:

*"Controversies involving questions of public policy can rarely, if ever, be reversed by the blind application of sedentary legal principles. The very nature of the concept of public policy itself militates against an attempt to define its ingredients in a manner which would allow one to become complacent in the thought that these precepts which society so steadfastly embraces today will continue to serve as the foundation upon which society will function tomorrow. Public policy, like society, is continually evolving, thus entrusted with its implementation must respond to its ever — changing demands."*<sup>8</sup>

Deuteronomy 24 when x-rayed under a public policy concept as we understand it today would be universally found to be illegal, immoral, discriminatory. Certainly it would

not be in accord with the Constitution and laws of any civilized state.

The Tractate Gittin deals with dissolution of marriage by divorce. Although the Court had no authority to issue a letter of divorce, as this had to come from the husband, we, nevertheless, find the Rabbis, while robed judicially, were in that capacity emasculating the so-called scripture-oriented divorce law by rewriting the text under the umbrella of rabbinical interpretation. In doing so, the Rabbi-Judges failed to give heed to the laws and rules imposed upon the people. The stricture imposed was: "You shall not add anything to what I command you or take away from it, but keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I enjoin upon you — I have imparted to you laws and rules as the Lord my God has commanded me, for you to abide by in the land which you are about to invade and occupy."<sup>9</sup>

If therefore the interpretation given Deuteronomy 24 is contrary to the plain meaning of the text, it can be justified only if the passage itself is not scriptural. Let us see how the following requirement applied to various situations: (1) He writes her a divorce; (2) He giveth it in her hands; (3) He sends her out of his house.

The plain meaning is that the husband himself must write the divorce, that he must put it in her hands and that he must put her out of the house. Having all this in mind, let us consider specific decisions and see how the Rabbis interpreted the meaning of a few simple words:

*"It once happened that a certain man in sound health who said 'Write out a letter of divorce for my wife'; went up to the top of the roof and fell off and died. Rabban Simon ben Gamaliel said: The Sages said that if he fell down of himself, then the letter of divorce is valid, but if the wind forced him down, it is not a valid letter divorce."*<sup>10</sup>

Presumably the requirement that the husband act personally in formulating a divorce, was intended to make him conscious of the grave step he was about to take and hopefully he might recant his action. In the guise of ameliorating the plight of the wife, the Rabbis developed a theory of agency so that a Divorce Writ may be written by another, permitting that it be handed to her by proxy, with a possible turn-over of 100 times before the Writ finally reached the wife.

After developing the fiction of agency, the Rabbis proceeded to do away with the requirement of personal delivery as illustrated in the following examples given in Gittin:

"If one threw a letter of divorce to his wife while she was *within her house* or *within her court-yard*, then she is divorced. If he threw it when she was *inside his house*, or *in his court-yard*, even if he were with her in bed, she is not divorced, but if into her lap or into her work-basket (which she used for spinning and weaving materials) then she is divorced."<sup>11</sup>

It took a kind of perverse genius to make the following decision:

"If she were standing on top of her roof and he threw the divorce papers to her, once it reaches roof level she is divorced; if he were on top of the roof and she was below, and he threw it to her, as soon as it left the domain of the roof, even if it were blotted out, or if it were burned, she is divorced."<sup>12</sup>

A writ of divorce was always considered a sacred document. Its preparation and authentication had to conform with exacting specification. Yet the Rabbis held a writ of divorce could be written on an olive leaf or on a cow's horn. Since the horn was part of the cow's body, delivery of the divorce required a delivery of the cow. Another example of tortured interpretation we find in the following reported case:

"If the wife was standing in the public domain and he threw the divorce paper to her, if it were closer to her, she is divorced, but if nearer



to him, she was not divorced, and if midway, she is as one divorced and as one not divorced.”<sup>1 3</sup>

We often heard it said that marital relations are a matter of religion, not subject to adversary proceedings and therefore requires mutual consent. But how does one obtain mutual consent when it lies within the power of the husband to give or refuse the get?

Many thinking Rabbis feel it is their responsibility to vitiate the rigid holdings of the Rabbinic courts pertaining to the law of marriage and divorce. The difficulty is, we do not have valiant Rabbis who would act with their conscience. They readily yield their own status, and put the onus of action on other Rabbis, who it is claimed are endowed with greater scholarship, are possessed with a sense of grandeur, power and veneration.

We do not hear their voices. We do hear from a segment of recalcitrant Rabbis who have successfully assumed the power to urge upon the Jews, a non-biblical law commonly treated as a custom. They have erected a wall that has accumulated barnacles and will keep it so, in order to tenaciously hold on, to a perpetuating dispensing power in the field of family law. All this is done in support of a belief that no particular Court of today possesses the wisdom surpassing that of its predecessors.

We urge that present Judges or Rabbis have a right to disagree with the analysis and conclusions of their predecessors. There are compelling reasons, and changes in circumstances which serve as a sufficient basis for abandoning what we in the present consider errors of the past. Sufficient facts appear that makes it necessary to abandon precedents that have wrought such great injustice.

Judge Stanley Fuld, a Trustee of The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, while sitting in the New York State Court of Appeals, said:

“The doctrine of stare decisis

was intended not to effect a petrifying rigidity, but to assure justice that flows from certainty and stability; if adherence to precedent offers not justice, but unfairness, not certainty, but doubt and confusion; it loses its right to survive, and no principle constrains the Court of Appeals to follow it.”<sup>1 4</sup>

The Jewish Theological Seminary is the only viable institution that is tailored to act on behalf of the multitude of Conservative Jews in their struggle to adhere to noble Jewish traditions. Absent affirmative action now, the time will soon have expired.

I have this additional suggestion. By authority of civil and religious law, a Rabbi chosen by a couple about to be married, executes and delivers a marriage license. In that respect he is agent of both. When the couple is divorced, either of them may file a copy of the divorce in a Rabbinic court set up for that purpose. The Rabbinic Court may be petitioned by either party for a get. If the court finds that one of the parties is entitled to a get and the other party refuses to give it, an agent may be appointed for the party to write and deliver it. From the few illustrations given as to writing and delivery of a get, it is reasonable to construe that where a man and woman are married, both civilly and religiously, and they employ the Rabbinate to issue and deliver the marriage license, they also at the same time authorize the issuance and delivery of a get. This is what is commonly known as submitting the jurisdiction of the person to a Special Court. Such interpretation would meet the test of due process and avoid subterfuges such as annulling a marriage which lasted 25 years or so.

Let us exercise the principle of equity which is embedded in the Jewish religion. Equity deems done what should have been done. There is no justification for delay. I would prefer, we admit we made a serious blunder. Blot it out. Whichever way

we do it, let it be done.

**NOTES:**

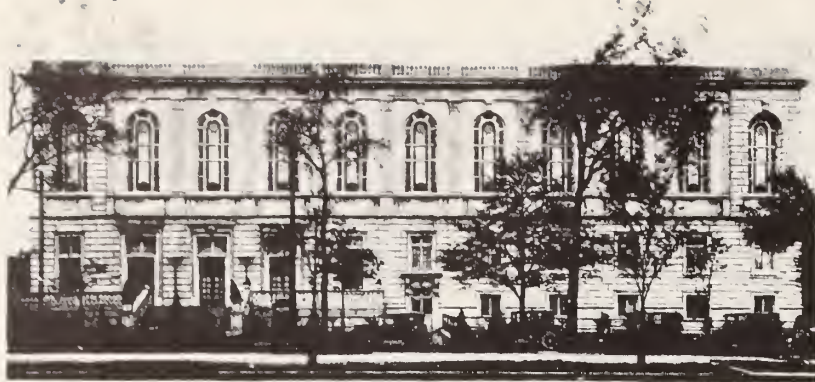
- <sup>1</sup> Brooklyn Jewish Center Review, 1977 and 1978 issues.
- <sup>2</sup> Vol. III Nashim by Philip Blackman, p. 392. This is the text used by Brooklyn Jewish Center Mishna Class. All further references will be made to this text.
- <sup>3</sup> Gittin ch. 9 Mishna 10, p. 444.
- <sup>4</sup> Deut. 24:18-19.
- <sup>5</sup> The Prophets — Neviim, p. 895; published by Jewish Publication Society of America, a new translation of the Holy Scriptures (2nd edition) 1978.
- <sup>6</sup> See n. 4.
- <sup>7</sup> See n. 5.
- <sup>8</sup> Matter of Sprinzen v. Normberg, 46 N.Y. (2d) 3/27/79.
- <sup>9</sup> Deut. 8:1; 4:5.
- <sup>10</sup> Gittin, ch. 6 Mishna 6, p. 424.
- <sup>11</sup> Gittin, ch. 8 Mishna 6, p. 431.
- <sup>12</sup> Gittin, ch. 8 Mishna 3, p. 433.
- <sup>13</sup> Gittin, ch. 8 Mishna 2, p. 432.
- <sup>14</sup> Bing v. Thuring, 2 N.Y. (2d) 656.

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# News of The Center

## NEW YEAR GREETINGS FROM OFFICERS AND STAFF

On the eve of the Jewish New Year 5740, the officers of the Brooklyn Jewish Center extend to all the members and friends of our institution their best wishes for a year of health, happiness and joy. May we, together with all mankind, be blessed with peace and prosperity.

In this hour, as the New Year is ushered in, we, the officers of this institution, take this opportunity of thanking all our members for their devotion and loyalty to our Center. We are confident that with the co-operation of our membership the year 5740 will be crowned with new achievements and success in our work on behalf of our community and our people.

L'Shonah Tovo Tikosevu!

L'Shonah Tovo Tikosevu!

Benjamin Markowe, President

Emanuel Cohen, Hon. President

Louis Kramer, Vice-President

Abraham M. Lindenbaum, Vice-President

Benjamin Moskowitz, Vice-President

Julius Kushner, Hon. Vice-President

Harry Leventhal, Hon. Vice-President

President

Meyer Abrams, Treasurer

Aaron Gottlieb, Hon. Treasurer

Murray T. Feiden, Secretary

### From the Center Staff

The Center Staff extends to the Rabbis, Officers, Trustees, Governors and members of the Brooklyn Jewish Center and their families cordial greetings and best wishes for the New Year.

### From the Sisterhood

The officers of the Sisterhood extend heartiest New Year Greetings to all of our members and their families. Sisterhood looks

back with pride and satisfaction on its activities during the year 5739 and hopes for an even more successful season in 5740.

With best wishes for a Shono Tova Umesuka.

Mrs. Julia Spevack,

President

Mrs. Anne Bernhardt

Mrs. Ida Cohen

Mrs. Sylvia Kramer

Mrs. Betty Marks

VicePresidents

Mrs. Gertrude Farb, Rec. Secy.

Mrs. Molly Markowe, Corr. Secy.

Mrs. Ann Beris, Soc. Secy.

Mrs. Sylvia Moskowitz, Treas.

### From the Men's Club

The officers of the Men's Club wish all its members, families and friends a year of health and good tidings and a year that will bring true peace to our beloved land, to the State of Israel and all mankind.

We invite each and everyone of you to participate in this coming year's events.

May the Lord bless the entire Center and may we and our families all be inscribed in the Book of Life and Happiness.

L'Shonah Tovo Tikosevu.

Archie Levinson

President

Louis Kramer

Dr. Milton Schiff

Stanley Bresnick

Honorary Presidents

Isaac Franco

Chas. Marks

Vice Presidents

Max Greenseid

Financial Secretary

Murray Greenberg

Administrative Assistant

## MISHNA FELLOWSHIP OPENS 24TH YEAR OF STUDY SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21

The Mishna Class starts up its 24th year of study on Sunday morning, October 21, at 9:30 A.M. Registration for the new semester gets under way as well. The program will open with services at half past eight, followed by breakfast, sponsored by Abraham M. Lindenbaum, Fellowship Chairman.

This breakfast will memorialize Lawrence Schiff who passed away last Spring. Mr. Schiff was a sponsor of at least two breakfasts each year for a long time.

Class Secretary Betty Marks will register all prior members and those who wish to enroll for the first time. The registration fee is for about 30 sessions. Except for the Winter and Passover recesses, classes meet every Sunday morning during the season.

That morning, too, will afford everyone an opportunity to serve breakfast sponsorship dates. Vice Chairman Isaac Franco is in charge of this facet of the agenda. Early action is urged as these dates are snapped up in a wink of the eye. Incidentally, October 28 has been taken by Kaye Gold for the breakfast in memory of her husband and our late Executive Secretary David Gold.

## MEN'S CLUB SUNDAY DINNER MEETING — OCTOBER 28

at 2:30 P.M.

Gala Program

consisting of entertainment by MICHAEL FRIEDMAN and VICKI PANVINI featuring show tunes, operatic melodies and Yiddish and Israeli songs.

### CHICKEN DINNER

preceded by Hors D'Oeuvres  
will be served at a nominal cost of  
\$12 per person  
Advance paid reservations  
are required

ARCHIE LEVINSON, President



# High Holy Days Services

## Rosh Hashanah

Services for Rosh Hashanah will be held on Friday and Saturday evenings, September 21 and 22 respectively at 7:00 o'clock; and Saturday and Sunday mornings, September 22 and 23 at 7:30 o'clock. The Torah reading will commence at 9:15 A.M. The shofar will be sounded Sunday morning at 10:15 A.M. All Worshippers are requested to be in their seats before that hour. The sermon on both days will be preached at about 10:30 A.M. The doors will be closed while the sermon is delivered. The Musaf services will begin at 11:00 o'clock and the services will finish at approximately 1:15 o'clock.

## Rosh Hashanah Sermons

The sermons will be preached on both days of Rosh Hashanah at 10:30 o'clock, by Rabbi Haymovitz.

## Yom Kippur

The Kol Nidre service which ushers in the Fast of Yom Kippur will be held on Sunday evening, September 30, at 6:30 o'clock.

Yom Kippur services will begin on Monday morning, October 1 at 8:30 o'clock. The Yizkor service will be held at 11:15 A.M.

On Yom Kippur Eve, the sermon by Rabbi Haymovitz will be preached immediately after the chanting of Kol Nidre. On Yom Kippur morning, the sermon by Rabbi Haymovitz will follow the Memorial Services.

## Cantor and Choir to Officiate in Main Synagogue

Cantor Abraham Levinson will officiate at the services to be conducted on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur in the Main Synagogue. He will be assisted by Daniel Oberman, and the Choir under the direction of Mr. Aaron Dinovitzer.

## Candle Lighting

### During High Holy Days

Candles will be lit for the Rosh Hashanah holidays on Friday, September 21 at 6:35 P.M. and Saturday, September 23 at 7:40 P.M.

On Sunday evening, September 30 (Kol Nidre Eve), candles will be lit at 6:20 P.M.

## Yizkor Services

For the benefit of the community, those without tickets, will be admitted to the Main Synagogue, to participate in the Yizkor services on Yom Kippur, Monday, October 1 at 11:15 A.M.

## Holiday Gym Schedule

The Gym and Baths Department will be closed Sunday, September 23, for the Rosh Hashanah holiday and will reopen on Monday, September 24, for men.

The following week, the Department will be closed Monday, October 1 for Yom Kippur and will reopen Tuesday, October 2 at 10:00 A.M. for women.

## SISTERHOOD'S ANNUAL LUNCHEON

In Honor of Vice President  
BETTY MARKS

Tuesday, November 27, at noon  
Reserve the Date!  
Belle Franco and  
Sylvia Moskowitz  
Co-Chairmen

## CALENDAR DIARIES

1979-80/5740 Calendar Diaries are available for the asking at the Main Desk. We are indebted to Riverside Memorial Chapel for its kindness in providing diaries for our members.

## SUKKOT SERVICES

Kindling of Candles

Friday, October 5: 6:12 P.M.

Saturday, October 6: 7:13 P.M.

Services: 6:00 P.M.

Saturday and Sunday mornings

October 6 and 7: 8:30 A.M.

\* \* \*

## HOSHA'NA RABBAH SERVICES

Friday, October 12 at 7:00 A.M.

\* \* \*

## CONCLUDING SUKKOT SERVICES

Kindling of Candles

Friday, October 12: 6:02 P.M.

Saturday, October 13: 7:05 P.M.

Services: 6:00 P.M.

Saturday and Sunday mornings

October 13 and 14: 8:30 A.M.

\* \* \*

## CANTOR LEVINSON

will officiate with the Choir  
under the leadership of  
Mr. Aaron Dinovitzer

\* \* \*

## SABBATH WORSHIP

Friday, October 19

Kindling of Candles: 5:50 P.M.

Services: 6:00 P.M.

## SABBATH MORNING SERVICES

October 20 at 8:30 A.M.

Blessing of New Month of Heshvan  
which will be observed on

Sunday and Monday, October 21 and 22

Sidra: BERESHIT

Genesis 1:1-6:8

Prophets: I Samuel 20:18-42

\* \* \*

Friday, October 26

## BALFOUR DAY

Kindling of Candles: 5:40 P.M.

Services: 6:00 P.M.

## SABBATH MORNING SERVICES

October 27 at 8:30 A.M.

Sidra: NOAH

Genesis 6:9-11:32

Prophets: Isaiah 54:1-55:5

\* \* \*

## RABBI HAYMOVITZ

will preach the sermons on all  
Sabbath and Festival mornings

\* \* \*

## SATURDAY MINHA SERVICES

at 5:30 P.M.

Followed by MAARIV

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## *Be Thoughtful – Leave A Legacy!*

YOU can HELP the CENTER in many ways—by

- (a) a bequest in your will
- (b) a gift of life insurance policy
- (c) a trust naming the Center as beneficiary

For further information, you, your attorney, accountant,  
or insurance broker are invited to consult with

MAURICE KOZINN  
Chairman,,  
Legacy Development Committee

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The Gold and White motif of the lobby and the spacious ballrooms permit the use of any table decor you may choose.

**Attractive price arrangements** make it advantageous and conducive for you to visit our Center's Catering Department.

**Our Parking Lot is conveniently located adjacent to the Center Building.**

Call our Office for arrangements.

*Reserve*

THURSDAY EVENING  
OCTOBER 25, 1979

**for our  
ANNUAL MEETING**

Election of Officers

\* Annual Report by our President,  
Mr. Benjamin Markowe

\* Refreshments and Entertainment  
Social Hour

*Rosh Hashanah Greetings*

*New Year Greetings*

FROM

MR. and MRS.

JEFFREY AARON

AND FAMILY

57-68 228th Street

Bayside, N.Y.



*New Year Greetings*

*from*

A. DAVID BENJAMIN

AND FAMILY

20 Plaza Street

*Greetings*  
*for the*  
*New Year*

FROM

MR. and MRS.

EMANUEL COHEN

10 Plaza Street



*A Very Happy*

*New Year*

FROM

MR. and MRS.

EDWARD ISAACS

MR. and MRS. JULIUS KUSHNER  
RABBI and MRS. HAROLD KUSHNER  
and FAMILY

MR. and MRS. JULIUS KUSHNER  
RABBI and MRS. HAROLD KUSHNER  
and FAMILY

RABBI and MRS. PAUL KUSHNER  
and FAMILY

extend their fervent wishes to all  
for a New Year of Peace and Health . . .  
and

in loving memory,  
on these High Holy Days,  
her family and dear friends

fondly remember  
SARAH H. KUSHNER  
A woman of valor . . .



IN FOND REMEMBRANCE ON THE  
HIGH HOLY DAYS

JUDGE JOSEPH A. SOLOVEI

DR. SAMUEL SOLOVEI

and Loving Parents,

JACOB and RACHEL SOLOVEI

BRUNICE BLAUSTEIN

Loving Daughter of

ANNA B. SOLOVEI

BY

SARAH and ANNA SOLOVEI

215 East 68th Street

New York, N.Y. 10021

MRS. ROSE G. MEISLIN

AND FAMILY

1450 President Street

On Her 92nd Birthday

extends Heartfelt

New Year's Greetings

to

RABBI ISRAEL H. LEVINTHAL



*In Memory Of*

LAWRENCE SCHIFF

“ZEIT MIR ALLE GEZUNT”

*FROM HIS LOVING WIFE*

GERTRUDE SCHIFF

MR. and MRS. MORTIMER S. SCHIFF

MR. and MRS. DAVID E. SCHIFF

GRANDCHILDREN and

GREAT GRANDCHILDREN

*New Year Greetings*

*from*

MR. and MRS.

HARRY LEVENTHAL

MR. and MRS.

JULIUS LEVENTHAL



MR. and MRS.  
WILLIAM C. SMERLING

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*A Happy New Year*

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MR. and MRS.  
JACK STERMAN  
AND FAMILY

**MRS. SAMUEL L. HOFFMAN**

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WILLIAM I. SIEGEL**



**Dr. IRVING and SYLVIA HOROWITZ**

**AND CHILDREN**

**Dr. ERNEST and MAUREEN**

**STEVEN and BRENDA**

**AND GRANDCHILDREN**

**CLIFF and ETTA**

**SANDY and DEBBIE**

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*A Happy New Year*

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**MR. HARRY M. LEVINE**

**IN MEMORY OF WIFE,**

**ANNA**

**1655 Flatbush Avenue**

**MR. and MRS.  
ABRAM SHORIN  
AND FAMILY**

5700 Collins Avenue  
Miami Beach, Florida

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**לשנה טובה תכתבו**

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**MR. and MRS.  
MEYER ABRAMS**

120 East Hartsdale Avenue  
Hartsdale, N. Y. 10530

HON. and MRS.  
ABRAHAM M. LINDENBAUM

9 Prospect Park West

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*A Happy New Year*

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MR. and MRS.  
BENJAMIN MOSKOWITZ  
AND FAMILY

92-30 56th Avenue  
Elmhurst, N. Y.



**MR. and MRS.  
BENJAMIN MARKOWE  
AND FAMILY**

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**LAWRENCE I. HOROWITZ**

**DR. and MRS. DAVID FORSTED**

**HILARY LYNN FORSTED**

**ADAM SETH FORSTED**

**MR. and MRS. LAWRENCE MEYER**

100 Woodruff Avenue

**MRS. LOUIS MOSKOWITZ**

**AND FAMILY**

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**לשנה טובה תכתבו**

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Hollywood, Florida

**MR. and MRS.**

**JOSEPH HELLER**

MR. and MRS.  
MORRIS Z. OTTENSTEIN

DR. and MRS. MILTON SCHIFF  
1303 Carroll Street

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*A Happy New Year*

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MR. and MRS. ALAN M. MOSS  
and  
OSCAR and ANN FRUCHTMAN

TEMY and MURRAY GOLDSMITH



**DR. HAROLD and BIANCA BERGMAN**  
and Family

**MR. and MRS.**  
**MAX BALLAS**  
North Miami Beach, Florida

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**לשנה טובה תכתבו**

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**MR. and MRS.**  
**HARRY ELLENPORT**

**MR. and MRS.**  
**MAX I. COHEN**

LOUIS and SYLVIA B. KRAMER

20 Plaza Street

IRENE and JOSEPH DAKS

and

MRS. MOSES SPATT

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*A Happy New Year*

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ABE FELDMAN

25 Sutton Place South

New York, N.Y. 10022

MR. THEODORE LEVEY

25 West 13th Street

New York, N.Y.

**MR. MAX GOLDBERG**

**AND FAMILY**

97-40 62nd Drive  
Rego Park, N. Y.

**MR. and MRS. SIMON ABRAHAM**

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**לשנה טובה תכתבו**

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**LEONARD ROSEN**

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**MR. and MRS.**

**NAT MARK**

**SAMUEL "BUDD" and**

**RUTH SCHEIN**

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**NATALIE and WALTER BRONSTER  
AND FAMILY**

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**MARION and MURRAY ROSOF**

36 Banbury Avenue  
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BENJAMIN ZOHN**

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**IRVIN and LAURA RUBIN**

Julie, Audrey and Jesse  
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**MRS. ANNE BERNHARDT**

**LEON, IRVING and SUSAN**

135 Eastern Parkway

MR. and MRS.  
CHARLES J. MARKS

712 Montgomery Street

MR. and MRS.  
HARRY MASLOW

20 Plaza Street

DR. and MRS.  
SAMUEL SOLOMON

1593 President Street

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AND FAMILY

MRS. PHILLIP BRENNER

MR. and MRS. HOWARD D. SELINE  
AND FAMILY

1535 E. 14th Street

*in honor of Rabbi Leventhal and Family*

**HON. and MRS.  
LEON DEUTSCH  
AND FAMILY**

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**MR. and MRS. ISAAC FRANCO**

Howard, Karen, Lisa, Carey and Wendy

202 Canterbury Gate  
Lynbrook, N.Y.

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*A Happy New Year*

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*Greetings From*

**MR. MONROE MARKOWITZ**

**AND CHILDREN**

Martin, Phyllis, Joel, Nancy and Lanie

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*Extend New Year Greetings to the Entire Center Family*

65-24 162nd Street  
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**JUDGE and MRS.  
MURRAY T. FEIDEN**

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**MR. and MRS.  
ALVIN GLICKMAN  
AND CHILDREN**

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**לשנה טובה תכתבו**

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and children  
Charlotte and Allen

**DR. HENRY ROSNER**

4824 Avenue I

**MR. and MRS.  
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488 Madison Avenue  
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**MR. JACOB HOFFMAN**

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**MRS. BESS LEWIN**

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*A Happy New Year*

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**MRS. JULIA SPEVACK  
AND FAMILY**

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ISRAEL H. LEVINTHAL  
AND FAMILY

MRS. DAVID M. GOLD  
and  
MR. and MRS.  
ELIAS LEO GOLD

RABBI and MRS.  
DAVID HAYMOVITZ  
AND FAMILY

DR. and MRS.  
ISIDORE BERIS  
520 East 21st Street

לשנה טובה תכתבו

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DR. and MRS.  
SAMUEL WALDMAN  
AND FAMILY  
Floral Park, N. Y.

RABBI and MRS.  
MORDECAI H. LEWITTES  
AND CHILDREN

DR. and MRS.  
HERMAN BROWMAN  
AND FAMILY



MR. and MRS.  
GEORGE GITELSTEIN  
AND FAMILY

DR. and MRS.  
JOSEPH B. PINCUS  
AND FAMILY

MR. and MRS.  
ROBERT GUTCHMAN  
Deerfield Beach, Florida

MRS. NATHAN D. SHAPIRO

*A Happy New Year*

MR. and MRS.  
HERBERT MAISLER

MR. and MRS.  
ARCHIE LEVINSON

DR. and MRS.  
ROBERT LIPPIN

MR. BENJAMIN STONE

SONYA and DAVID  
RUDAVSKY

MAX and SALLIE WOLFE

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AND FAMILY

154 Beach 142nd Street  
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REV. and MRS.  
ABRAHAM FRIEDMAN  
AND FAMILY

BUDDY and HELENE  
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MR. and MRS.  
HUGH GREENBERG  
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MRS. DOROTHY SMALLBERG

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IRVING S. HOROWITZ

MRS. JACOB A. FORTUNOFF  
AND FAMILY

MRS. ESTELLE L. KUHN  
333 East 46th Street  
New York, N.Y. 10017

MRS. ETHYL Z. DAN

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*A Happy New Year*

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